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LSI
Session 2 Guided Tour NOFO

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>> Please type yes in the chat panel to confirm your audio is working. Great. Thanks. It looks like everyone's sound is working. Brian, you have the floor. BRIAN: Great. Thank you. If anybody has any difficulties, please let us know in the chat box to the right. And our colleagues at LSI will jump in to help you out. All lines are unmute and we will be taking questions through the chat pod. As many of you know, I like to get people to use that checkbox by think name of organization, city and state. Thanks for sharing. If you have not already, you can share the name of your organization and city and state your joining from in the chat box. That is how we will take questions here today you can leave a question at any time but we might need to be a bit patient for us to pick it up. Particularly today.

One other caveat about questions -- because this is competitive there are a few questions I cannot answer. If I just do not note the information offhand or if your particular question is specific or requires a lot of context and discussion -- we cannot address that today we want to make sure everyone gets all the information they need. If that is the case, you can send your question two 2020RSVP@cns.gov. If you look at the links box at the bottom right of your screen, you will see questions and you can click that to go and get the URL. I will also drop it in the chat box. There is another question that none of us can answer because it is a competitive process. We cannot provide individual coaching. I cannot tell you what to put in your application. I can help you understand rules and requirements and tools available but it is up to you to put together your best application for this process.

We're going to dive in to some of our content. The webinar today will be divided up into three sections. We will provide information about the process as a whole and then spent most of our time walking through the Notice of Funding Opportunity. That is why we call this webinar a guided tour of that document. In the third component is picking up questions you may have. You should see changes on your screen. As many of you know this is one of a series of webinars. It will be repeated on September 5th. We have multiple opportunities

to learn. If we do not answer your question here today feel free to come back for other opportunities. You can register for all of these at the link at the bottom. That is also where we will put the recordings of these calls. It takes a few days to get those up. Check next week for the ones we are doing this week.

Finally, we want to know a little bit more about all of you. If I can ask my LSI colleagues to bring up the first poll so we can see who is here in the audience. Who has received a federal grant before including one from CNCS? Will get that a minute. It looks like the majority of folks here have received a federal grant before So a lot of the parts of this process will be familiar to you. What about Senior Corps specifically? How well do you know Senior Corps? Brand-new to all of this or a current grantee? We have a lot of folks who have received prior federal grants but are new to Senior Corps. It is my honor to welcome you to the National Service community. And to thank all of you who have been part of the Senior Corps community for so long. Building up a network of volunteer organizations across the country. Is a pleasure to be partners with outstanding organizations.

The next poll please. National Service community is very diverse and we see some of that on the screen. Please let us know what the primary field of your organization is. Most will fall into more than one but pick the one you think best describes you to give us a sense of the community that we have. A pretty good mix. It looks like aging is the topic so far and that is pretty common. Volunteerism and community development and something else all close on his skills. Interesting to see that diversity.

Let's skip Question Number 4 and jump to Question Number 5 -- have you attended any of our other webinars? We did have one other webinar in this series yesterday. Let's see who's able to attend that. It looks like most of you were. Wonderful. About one-third of you were not. I will say we will not cover everything we covered in yesterday's webinar today. Today we focus on Notice of Funding Opportunity so check back for the recording of yesterday's webinar

next week. So you can get all the information you might have missed. You can also come back for the second presentation of that life session.

Will be covering three major topics. Quick overview of competition basics. Get everyone on the same page. And spent most of our time walking through the Notice of Funding Opportunity before recap and questions. What are you all here to learn? If you attended yesterday this is a refresher. The Corporation for National community service sponsor of the RSVP program is now accepting applications for the RSVP program. Program for volunteers 55 and older. Applications due by 5:00 p.m. ET on September 25th. We have an optional notice of intent to apply which is due on 5:00 p.m. ET on August 30th. Specific geographical areas are available to be served and that is laid out in Appendix A.

And if you go back to the Senior Corps resource box on the bottom right you will see link to 2020 RSVP competition page. All of the resources today will be on that page. Appendix A is on that page. Appendix A is really important -- probably the second most important document. It explains how we have three things tide together for applications. When you apply for an RSVP grant you are applying for a package -- if you serve a particular geographic service area; for a maximum amount of funding; and you need to commit to recruiting and managing a minimum number of unduplicated volunteers. If you look at Appendix A you will see something like this. This is a simplified. This is the first opportunity you would see -- Alabama first in the alphabet. All of the opportunities have been opportunity number based upon the state. And then you see the funding amount. That is the amount available to serve the geographic service area you see on the far right -- those three counties. You cannot request more funding than that to serve that specific area. In addition, you need to have at least the number of unduplicated volunteers specified in your application. Those three things. Funding amount, number of unduplicated volunteers and area affected -- is a package deal. That is what you are applying for.

When you look at Appendix A you will see 228 opportunities in 45 states. Why distribution of opportunities. For those who are hoping to serve an area not

in Appendix A, though we have a competition like this spread out over three years. We did one cycle last year and 82nd cycle initiate with other areas and a third one next year with other geographic service areas. If you do not see your area, come back next year and keep your eyes open for this process or use one of the resources in the Senior Corps resource links called National Service in your state to catch up on what is going on in your state right now. Great way to get involved is looking for partnership with an existing organization. We're going to be focusing on Notice of Funding Opportunity. It has a lot of information about your application. And that is where we will spend most of our time. Is very important tool. You will find it on the RSVP competition page. Right there. In a moment I will pull that up and take a look and we will walk through it together and look at highlight. But I will pause and take a couple questions I have already seen come in.

Kate asks does RSVP supply support with recruiting? Current volunteers in a geographic service area? Kate, we at Senior Corps hope to provide grantees with support for recruitment. That can take many forms. Brochures are available. Marketing products. We are hoping to launch an online to soon. When it comes to contact information, that may or may not be possible depending upon specific situation. If there is no RSVP grantee in your area we cannot share. Even if there is, that can get complicated. We cannot commit to specific contact information.

And Denise, some service areas will have been existing pool of RSVP grantees because there is an incumbent. Many are on the line with a in other areas there will not be any. It will be up to a new organization to build that out. Anthony says -- do we have to commit to a minimum of 218 volunteers? Yes. That is correct. Minimum amount unduplicated volunteers.

Blake asks if there are no applications or funded programs from our area this round, will it reappear and what is the next two rounds? Blake, good question. It depends I cannot speak to what might happen in the future. It depends upon congressional appropriations. So I don't have a solid answer for that. But if you

are curious, come back next year and see what we have. Also, at the end of this process in early March we will announce results.

How do we find out if there is an existing program in our area? Glad you asked him. If we go to Senior Corps resource links and look at National Service in your state that takes you to an area where we have information on all of the programs in your state. Includes existing RSVP programs and many other programs. Follow that link to your state. If you look to the right of your screen, if we have extra time we can look at it together, you will see detailed report. That lists all of the projects in your state.

We have a few other questions [coughing] but I want to make sure we get to our main topic -- Notice of Funding Opportunity. So I'm going to hold other questions so we can step forward. We will. Those up at the end.

I'm going to pull up the Notice of Funding Opportunity. It is the equivalent of a request for proposals or request for applications. We call it Notice of Funding Opportunity.

The most important thing is this guided tour is not a substitute for reading the entire Notice of Funding Opportunity and reviewing the other associated documents in depth. I am only going to spotlight a few specific things that I think are helpful to look out for. However, if you intend to apply and you want to have an competitive application you must be the Notice of Funding Opportunity in full and other supporting documents on the homepage. At the end I will ask you a few questions. I will ask Lynn right now -- if you attend this webinar does that mean you do not have to read the Notice of Funding Opportunity? Does attending this webinar get you out of reading the full Notice of Funding Opportunity? Good [laughing]. Thanks for bearing with me. It's a bit silly but I want to make sure that is 100% clear.

Diversion you get on the homepage will not have highlights. I have highlighted important dates. Optional notification is due Friday August 30th 5:00 p.m. Eastern time. Applications do at 5:00 p.m. Eastern time. I like to highlight Eastern time. I work out of central time which means I have to do some mental

gymnastics to make sure this works. Wherever you are convert that to your time zone. However, none of you should be submitting your applications a minute before the deadline. That is not a recipe for success. We strongly, strongly encourage you to submit your application well in advance. So note the time zone but you should not be waiting until the final minute to submit your application. We hope to notify successful applicants by early March 2020.

Background information about RSVP. If you want to learn more about background information, will provide more in tomorrow's webinar. CNCS has six key focus areas and the key goal of capacity building. Let's look at these focus areas. Disaster services. Economic opportunities. Education. Environmental stewardship. Healthy futures. Veterans and military families. And capacity building. It is not technically a focus area -- for technical reasons. Legislation established specific areas and capacity building is not one but we group them together. Applications must have some activity in one of these focus areas. If you want to learn more about them you can do that here. Our authorizing legislation -- reauthorization -- says we need to fund programs that have some activity -- not all -- some activity in these six focus areas. They are really brought. Not many organizations have trouble finding something to do within these six focus areas.

I like to differential these from the funding priorities. These are different. Applicants are required to address one or more of the focus varies above. CNCS will not consider applications that do not address any of the focus areas. However, in addition to the focus areas -- we are talking about funding priorities -- CNCS is particularly interested in supporting applications that propose to include one or more of these priorities. These priorities sometimes overlap with focus areas but are often more specific. In healthy futures we are looking at access to care in opioid abuse. Education -- intergenerational programming. These priorities are not required. However, we are particularly interested in supporting applications that address them.

We will spend time looking at the selection process and that is where these come in. These are not requirements. However, they are particular priorities. They are subcategories of these focus areas up here.

If you have a copy of this printed out feel free to follow along. You can navigate to it using resource links. I'm going to jump to national performance measures. We require all of our grantees across the country in any program to measure their performance using this set of national performance measures. It is a menu. We used to measure your activity and your impact. In the world of RSVP, not all of your activity has to be put into national performance measures. You have to do two things. One, you have to manage at a minimum the total number of unduplicated volunteers listed in Appendix A period that goes back to the earlier question. When you see the number in Appendix A, that is the total number of unduplicated volunteers you need to recruit and manage in that service area. However, there is an additional requirement. For every $1000 in annual federal funding at least one unduplicated RSVP volunteer must be placed in work plans that result in National Performance Measure outcomes. So within the total number, there is a smaller number of unduplicated volunteers that must be included in these national performance measures. The others you can include in something we call other community priorities. So we do not need you to measure their performance. But for every $1000 in annual federal funding we need these volunteers programmed into performance measures so we can get a sense of the impact they are having. And that should make sense. Because this is a federal program. The American people through elected representatives in Congress who authorized funding, want to know the impact this program is having. And this is one way we do that.

We do not have time to go through examples about this particular requirement. However, that is just in this webinar. Will have another webinar that focuses on performance measurement. And we will talk about this more in tomorrow's webinar too. And we did one example yesterday. We will not focus

here today -- a little bit complicated but we will not focus here today. Look to our other webinars to get a deep dive in this particular topic.

I'm going to look at the chat and see if we have questions about anything gone over so far. Paying on one second while I check the questions.

Looking at some of the questions -- we'll the survey submitted on survey monkey replace the notification of intent to apply? Where is the link -- I will find it in here. This is the notification of intent to apply -- it is a survey monkey. So that is the notification of intent to apply. Allison asks -- can capacity building be an objective? Yes. Hester asked if an organization commits to volunteers needed, CNCS will only suggest select one organization for each area? Correct. In the FAQ document you will see a question that addresses that specifically that explains how this works. You must apply for the total number of unduplicated volunteers there. Let me read it to you. I will read it out loud. FAQ 8.5. Can it be split between multiple awards? Each opportunity awarded to only one organization. Not split. That is in the FAQs that you can find on the same page as this document. Thank you for this questions.

Now we have total amount of funding we expect to give approximately. Will be applying for the maximum amount in the Appendix A. This also describes project period. We generally make three-year grant awards. Initial award for first year. That comes with funding. Continuation awards for subsequent years depend upon availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance and are not guaranteed. We make an award for three years with funding for the first year. Funding for second and third year based upon whether Congress provides funds and satisfactory performance. So a three-year project period with individual grant years within that.

Matching. I will read this. Applicants are required to partially match funds for their projects through local and federal contributions. The required local contribution in year one of the grant is at least 10% of the budget. The required portion is at least 20% in year two and 30% in year three and subsequent years if grant nude beyond three years. So you have a sliding scale. 10%, then 20%,

then 30%. But if you are an incumbent. Someone who already has an RSVP grant and is already serving a particular area. So incumbents are required to budget and raise at least 30% of the total project budget from the beginning. If you already have an RSVP grant you will come in at the 30% level. New organizations have the opportunity to scale up over there first three years.

An important part of the application -- one of the most common questions. What should I include in the application? In a prior life it was something I focused on. We have the outline here. Explains the different portions. The application is submitted in an electronic grant management system called eGrants. You will see it has specific sections -- modules -- for each of the sections. So you will not be submitting one long Word document instead you will be putting that into the electronic grant management system. We will look at how to do that in a minute. We do not recommend starting in eGrants. It is a piece of software and it has its flaws. So we will look at strategy we recommend using to build your application, in just a minute.

15 double-spaced pages is the limit as it prints out. So you're almost done, print out your application and review it to make sure it is within the page limit.

Here on the top of page 8 we have administrative state that can trip up some applicants. I think most federal grant programs require you to register if you want to apply. This is a free system. But you must have an active registration. That helps the government make sure you are not doing bad things. Have not been caught doing something with your funding you are not supposed to be doing. You have to register and renew annually. If you do not know your status, check that if you plan to apply. It is easy to do. Not a long process. And it is free. Do not leave it to the end because it could trip you up. Don't miss this administrative step.

We've talked about submission dates and times but we cannot say it too often. Wednesday September 25th by 5:00 p.m. Eastern time. But submit in advance! We will continue.

I'm going to read this section out loud. CNCS recommends the applicant create an account and begin the application at least three weeks before deadline. Applicants recommended to draft as Word document and copy and paste text into appropriate fields in eGrants no later than 10 days before deadline to ensure sufficient time to make corrections or addressed potential technical issues. If you run into technical issues, we have a hotline and a web form you can use for assistance. But give yourself time. We do not want to be at 4:00 p.m. Eastern time on September 25th working through issues because someone else might need us to and there is limited capacity. So please draft your application as a Word document and move it to the grant when you are ready and please do not wait until the deadline to do that. Do it at least 10 days before. You have all the information you need to start right now. You might want to attend more training and that is great but do not wait for that. Get started as soon as you can. You short Word document to draft the application. And we will spotlight one tool later on that will help you draft your national performance measures. Another portion of the grant management system.

In addition to what should be included in the application many of you also want to know what determines which applications will get funded. This determines which applications will get funded. Specific criteria spelled out here. Here are the weights. We tell you what we are looking for in applications. Narratives. Articulate theory of change. Recruitment and development of volunteers. Plan and infrastructure to ensure RSVP volunteers receive training needed to succeed in the service activity described. These are the criteria used to determine the most competitive applications. This is where you want to focus when you are developing applications.

Panels of reviewers including external and some internal and some in other federal roles will assess applications based upon criteria above. That is how we determine the most competitive applications. So you want to spend a lot of time focusing on these criteria and making sure your application is responsive to

them. Put your best foot forward and this is what our reviewers will be using to determine which applications are the most competitive.

We have a couple other things to go through so I will keep going and we will come back for questions as we get towards the end of the document.

CNCS anticipates announcing results by early March 2020 contingent on the availability of congressional appropriations. And because we are a federal program, these grants come with a certain set of rules and regulations that guide them. When you accept funds from the federal government you also accept rules that come with them. You agree to abide by a certain set of rules that helps us all steward taxpayer funds well. You will see those spelled out here. Become familiar with these. Because if you do receive a grant you will be held accountable. This is us telling you our expectations if you receive a grant. So make sure you reserve these. You should be familiar with this uniform guidance which governs how grant funds can be spent across entire federal government. We also have our own requirements. To conduct National Service criminal history checks. This is the process that applies to all staff who will be on your grant. There is a lot of information here. And there are links to further resources. One thing that is new this year is -- is partially new. But one thing I would like to highlight is that the cost of conducting these is an allowable expense under the awards. And in particular, grantees should utilize two vendors to conduct these so you can budget appropriately. Put them in your budget.

I think that is all I highlighted here. Except the e-mail address which we have already discussed.

I'm going to start answering questions. But I will not be answer able to answer every question today. We have other training opportunities. Please also be aware of this resource that you can use to get more hands-on assistance if we are not able to answer your question. I'm going to pick up the questions where we left off here. I had a couple questions before -- Janet and Dawn. Janet asked there are a number of unduplicated volunteers already working with us or the number we would host? More the second. Number of the specific RSVP

volunteers that you will have and manage. As you will see in FAQs, you can take volunteers you are already managing and turn them into RSVP volunteers. Eligibility process. Then entitled to certain benefits. If you turn them into RSVP volunteers then they count as an unduplicated volunteer. I also saw a question that came in later which is do they need to be new every year? And the answer is no. If the number is 100 that does not mean you need to recruit 100 people in your one and new people in your two. It can be the same 100 people. At any time you have that number you do not have to keep multiplying it every year. But the dollar amount is an annual amount. You receive that amount for your first year. And that same amount for the second year. Let's say it is $100,000. You're one you get $100,000. And subject to appropriations and performance in your to you get $100,000. Don asks what happens if we do not get in a number of volunteers required? I cannot answer it categorically. It depends upon specific circumstances. One scenario where grantee receives funds but do not make a good-faith effort to skew the program. Supposed to have 100 volunteers and only have one. Another scenario where organization is working hard and only have 99 -- two very different situations. We evaluate success at the end of the three-year project period so that is when we really take a hard look at what has been achieved. End of the three-year project period. In between you have communication with program officers. We will work with you and help you achieve your goals.

I have answered the question about Appendix A. I believe I've answered Don's question. Robert asks not renewed yearly? I will go back to Notice of Funding Opportunity itself. I recommend you do this as well. Page 8 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity. Applications must include taxpayer identification number. Applicants can obtain a [indiscernible] number by calling the request line. Register at least 30 days before due date. Must register with system for award management and maintain an active SAM registration. Must maintain active registration throughout life of the award. SAM registration must be renewed annually. So you only receive done number once but need to maintain

an active SAM registration. Lisa asked do we create new application or continuation renewal? New. That is in our FAQs.

Background checks on volunteers as well as employees paid by grant? I want to be clear -- this required process of National Service criminal history checks is only applicable in the RSVP program to staff. What you do for volunteers will depend upon your specific organization. Patty asked if you are a current grantee and accept it augmentation funding, do we need to redo background check? If you are an incumbent -- have already received RSVP funds -- an individual only needs to be checked once through that process. However, if you are applying for first time you will need to check. Unless an individual leaves the organization and even then, there are more technicalities you can learn about when you get into this world. Even if they leave and come back, but we will not address that now. In general, one-time check. If you need more information please use the resources or shoot us an e-mail.

Is funding only competitive or noncompetitive admit renewals this year? We're talking about a specific competitive process. The opportunities that are going through this competitive process. But as I mentioned briefly, we divide up the competition across three years. Last year we had a number of service areas to go through competition and this year they would be going through what we call a continuation. That process of making sure their appropriations and satisfactory performance for second year. So there are other service areas going through that process right now.

What is the deadline for recruiting total number of unduplicated volunteers? We look at performance at the end of year three of the grant.

How frequently do RSVP volunteers tend to volunteer? What is the eligibility process for making current volunteer and RSVP volunteer? The first question is good but I cannot answer it. It really varies. It depends on a specific community and their need and a specific organization and how he chooses to manage these volunteers. There are RSVP volunteers who volunteer relatively infrequently. Others volunteer for a set number of hours every week. It is up to all of you to

determine what works best for your community. What does the eligibility process for making current volunteer and RSVP volunteer look like? Not complicated. Only real requirement is have to be 55 and older. Can be and RSVP volunteer. I will drop another link into the chat box here for the managing Senior core grant page. And you will see resources available. There is a handbook there. Which will spell out exactly how current RSVP organizations recruit and check eligibility of volunteers. Marion asked is financial management survey new? Descendant IRS returns? It has been around for a while. In terms of specific documents required by point you back to notice of funding opportunity and other tools we will look at just a second.

How do organizations typically recruit RSVP volunteers? It really varies. In some communities there are pools of seniors who will congregate around places of worship for coffeehouses. In others, online approach might be more relevant. There is no silver bullet or one way to do it. It is about your community. I cannot give you a one-size-fits-all answer.

As we are getting towards the end of the webinar, I want to mention a few other tools. These are all available at that same page in the Senior core resource length. 2020 RSVP competition page.

The first resource are the grant application instructions. Our electronic grants management system -- eGrants. These instructions give you step-by-step, click by click guidance for how to navigate that system. Include information about required documents. Great resource for the question about financial management.

We have talked about Appendix A -- available service areas in funding amounts and volunteers associated. In the next two resources are really important for performance measurement. Appendix B list national performance measurements and gives information about how they are used. Menu of output measures you will select from. And workplan development worksheets are helpful because they help you plot out how you will use them and our electronic grants management systems. EGrants is made up of these discrete modules

and one is about national performance measures. It asks you to program and plan in a certain way and provide certain information about your projected outcome amounts and the community need. It asked for that in a specific format and it can be difficult to build those within eGrants. If you're trying to change things and experiment with things it is difficult to do that within the systems. But the worksheets are Word documents you can use to plan things out. So you can make sure you're getting all your unduplicated volunteers where you want them to be. And finally we have frequently asked questions that you have heard me quote from already today.

A couple other things I can show you but I think I have answered all of the questions I have seen so far. If I have missed any please remind me. And if you have another question this is a good time to drop it in the chat box.

I'm not seeing any new questions so I'm going to go to the 2020 competition homepage and show a couple of these resources in a different way. You will see some changes on your screen while I do that.

We are here on the homepage. NOFO. Step-by-step instructions. Appendix A. Workplan development worksheets. There is also an appendix C. Also more information about required documents. I'm also going to do something I promised to do and check out National Service in your state page where I can show you where to get specific profiles. Let's take Illinois as an example. View the report. You see a great graphic which tells you National Service impact in Illinois. 1600 service sites 14,700 members 63.2 million 148 million dollars in scholarships. If I want that detail, to see who is working in my community I go over here because this is what is really going to tell me what is going on in my community this is all of the National Service. You start with AmeriCorps but if I do a search for RSVP -- there you have it. As our time gets low, let's pull over our two satisfaction survey questions. We appreciate if you fill out these simple quick questions. No need to click submit. Just choose the choice and it will automatically register it. Thank you, LSI team. Let's see if we have any other questions. Thank you for feedback. Also fill out survey which we used to make

sure we are doing well in getting your information you need. Richard asked about the RSVP handbook. Denise provided the correct link. Any other final questions? I'm not seeing any so we will wrap up a few minutes early today. Please come back for our other webinars. We have one tomorrow in two next week and then we will be repeating all of them more time as we move into September. I appreciate everyone coming out and we look forward to seeing your applications. That will do it for us.

　　[END OF SESSION]